

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 SWF-02 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-11 FRB-03 INR-11 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-03

SP-03 STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

AEC-11 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-03 INT-08 L-03 NSC-07 PM-07

SCI-06 SS-20 FEA-02 NEA-14 IO-14 PA-04 PRS-01 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 DRC-01 /212 W

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7264

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L EC BRUSSELS 5528

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG EEC FR

SUBJECT: EC COUNCIL (FOREIGN MINISTERS) MEETING, JULY 23:

DISCUSSION OF ENERGY STRATEGY AND ECG ENDS WITH NO AGREEMENT

REF: A. STATE 158015; B. EC BRUSSELS 5387; C. LONDON 9290

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1. SUMMARY: THE DISCUSSION OF ENERGY IN THE JULY 23 EC COUNCIL

MEETING UNEXPECTEDLY ENDED WHEN THE BRITISH REFUSED TO AGREE TO THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR A NEW STRATEGY FOR A COMMUNITY ENERGY POLICY. THIS BLOCKED ANY DISCUSSION OF EFFORTS TO MOVE THE FRENCH INTO CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE ECG, ALTHOUGH IT APPEARS THEY WERE NOT PREPARED FOR SUCH A DISCUSSION IN ANY CASE. OUR SOURCES COMMENT THAT IT WAS CLEARLY A "CLASH" BETWEEN THE UK AND THE OTHER EIGHT AND THAT IT WAS A "DISASTER" FOR THE ECG. END SUMMARY.

2. BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY POLITICAL DIRECTOR DAVIGNON, WHO IS ALSO CHAIRMAN OF THE ECG, TOLD US AFTER THE COUNCIL MEETING THAT THE DISCUSSION HAD BEEN A "DISASTER." HE CITED TWO REASONS: FIRST, HE SAID, THE DISCUSSION WAS CASUALTY OF CYPRUS BECAUSE UK FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN HAD TO LEAVE THE MEETING MONDAY EVENING AND THE UK DELEGATION WAS THEN CHAIRED BY PETER SHORE (AN AVOWED ANTI-MARKETEER) WHO WOULD NOT AGREE TO THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR A NEW ENERGY STRATEGY. SECOND, SAID DAVIGNON, IT WAS NOW APPARENT THAT THE FRENCH, CONTRARY TO THE VIEW OF THE EIGHT AT THE END OF LAST WEEK, HAD NOT REACHED INTERNAL AGREEMENT ON HOW BEST TO REPLY TO THE PRESENTATION BY THE EIGHT ON JULY 17 OF THE ECG EFFORTS TO PRODUCE AN AGREED IEP. HE SAID THE ALL IS CLEARLY IN THE FRENCH COURT AND THE EIGHT EXPECT TO HEAR FROM THEM NEXT WEEK, BUT "IT LOOKS BAD FOR THE ECG MEETING N MONDAY AND TUESDAY."

3. EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SIMONET'S CHEF DE CABINET MICHEL VANDEN ABEELE TOLD US THAT THE MEETING ENDED IN A "CLASH," A WORD HE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES, BETWEEN THE UK AND THE OTHER EIGHT. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE UK WOULD NOT AGREE ON THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR THE NEW ENERGY STRATEGY AND, THEREFORE, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FRANCE AND THE ECG WAS NOT DISCUSSED BECAUSE, IN THE BRITISH VIEW, THE ABSENCE OF A COMMUNITY ENERGY POLICY MEANT THAT COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL ENERGY COOPERATION COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED. HE COMMENTED THAT THE BRITISH POSITION OBVIOUSLY PLEASED THE FRENCH. HE SAID THAT SIMONET HAD REACTED BY SAYING THAT EACH MEMBER STATE CAN NOW GO ITS OWN WAY IN ENERGY MATTERS AND THOSE WHO WISH TO DO SO ARE FREE TO COOPERATE WITH THE US IN THE ECG. HE ADDED HIS PERSONAL COMMENT THAT THE ENERGY COMMITTEE HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN PROVEN AN UNRELIABLE MECHANISM FOR REFLECTING

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MEMBER STATE VIEWS. HE SAID THAT THE MOST EMBARRASSED INDIVIDUAL IN THE MEETING WAS OBVIOUSLY WILLIAMS, WHO REPRESENTED THE UK ON THE ENERGY COMMITTEE.

4. OTHER SOURCES WERE LESS HARSH. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER THE MEETING, SHORE MINIMIZED THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE DISCUSSION, SAYING THAT THE DIFFERENCE WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF METHODOLOGY. HE SAID THE RESOLUTION PRESENTED FOR THE MINISTERS'

CONSIDERATION ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES OF ENERGY POLICY BEFORE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION WAS AVAILABLE AND THE UK WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THE REVERSE. HE SAID THE UK REMAINS FULLY IN FAVOR OF A COMMUNITY ENERGY POLICY. (EMBASSY LONDON MAY WISH TO COMMENT.)

5. SAUVAGNARGUES, IN A SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE, TRADITIONALLY HELD BY THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT TO DISCUSS THE COUNCIL MEETING, ALSO PLAYED DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS AND EMPHASIZED THERE HAD BEEN NO SPIRIT OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE UK AND THE OTHER EIGHT. HE SAID ENERGY WOULD BE A PRIORITY ITEM FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT COUNCIL ON SEPTEMBER 17. GREENWALD

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